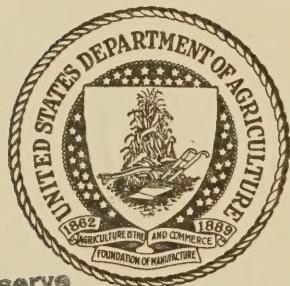


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Characteristics of a Working Conference

It has:

1. A steering committee - a group of 5 - 7 planners, representative of the conference members. They serve as a sounding board for the conference participants' reactions before and throughout the conference. They make decisions regarding the conference schedule based on participants' suggestions. This Committee works well in advance of and throughout the conference.
2. "Feeler letters" - letters planned by the steering committee and sent out ahead of time to the group of persons who will be asked to attend the working conference. The purpose of these letters is to take a problem census to find out what problems the participants face, want to discuss and work on.
3. Leadership teams - these are discussion leader, recorder, observer, and blackboard member for each problem group. The purpose of these teams is to get all points of view from the participants, keep the group producing usable ideas, record the gist of ideas expressed and evaluate the progress made by the group. They are given training in order to perform well.
4. Small group meetings as well as general sessions. Small groups work each on a separate major problem. Small groups make possible closer involvement of each participant in the analysis of problems and the planning for solutions.
5. Group decisions - in each small group a final session is provided for time to discuss what the group is to do about carrying out the decisions made during the previous session.
6. Group evaluations - this is the time at the close of each meeting when the thinking of the members is focused on what the group did well and what it might have done differently. Members analyze the specific types of participation in the meeting, how well participants stay on the subject, how different participants support each other in drawing out facts or developing viewpoints, and what the group accomplished.

Mary L. Collings  
8-27-51

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